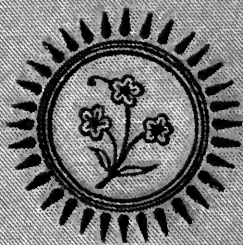


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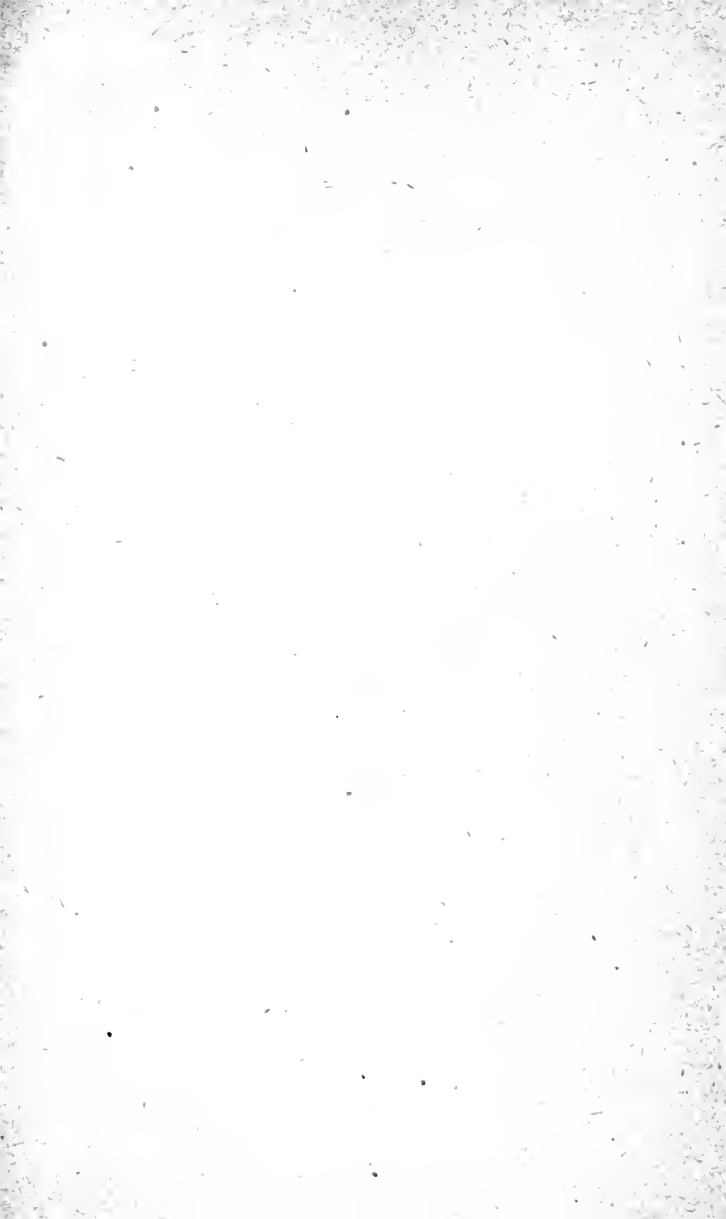


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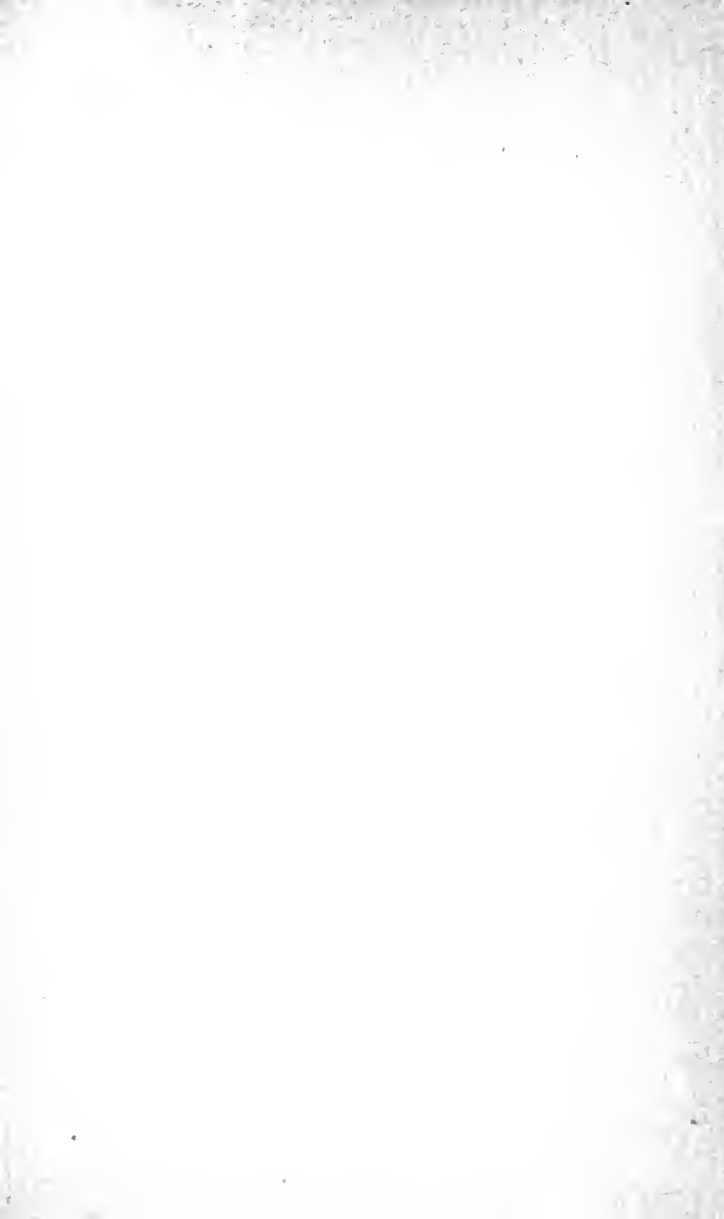




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Rosy Conroy.

Frontis.

ROSY CONROY'S LESSONS.

"Forgive us our Debts as we forgive our Debtors."

BY

JULIA A. MATHEWS,

AUTHOR OF THE "DRAYTON-HALL SERIES," ETC.



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ROSY CONROY'S LESSONS.



I.

Rosy's School.

ROSY Conroy stood in the yard, leaning upon the pump, and looking down thoughtfully into the pail into which the water ran slowly from the half-turned faucet that she held in her hand. A boy who stood at the open window of the basement had just called out to her, in a rough, loud voice, that she must not splash the stones, adding a rude threat to his command, and Rosy was thinking sorrowfully of a little friend who had lived in that basement only a few months before. But

the little friend, and the old grandfather with whom she had lived, had both gone home to the "Happy Land," and strangers occupied the low room which Rosy had once so loved to visit.

"Oh, I wish Margery was there yet," she said to herself with a sigh, as she leaned over her pail idly watching the trickling stream of water.

"Rosy, Rosy, child!" called a voice from the window above her.

"Yes, mother, I'm coming," cried Rosy, and turning on the full force of the water, she filled her pail to the brim, and, lifting it with both hands, went toward the house, splashing the water at every step over her bare feet and ankles.

"I'll be out after you if you don't stop spilling that water," called the boy from

the basement. "I'm just after cleaning the yard."

"The — water — wont — dirty — it," panted Rosy, as she struggled up the steps with her heavy burden.

She had answered him carelessly, but when, a moment after, she entered her mother's room and set the pail down upon the floor, Mrs. Conroy saw that her eyes were full of tears.

"Why, Rosy, dear, what is it, then?" she asked, tenderly, drawing the child to her and wiping her flushed cheek with her apron.

"Nothing," said Rosy, tremulously, "only that ugly boy in the basement is so cross; and I want Margery back there."

"And that's the sorrow, is it? Yes, yes, it's very sore to see them rough folks in the

old room. But we mustn't want Margery back, dear. She's best off where she is, no doubt," and the mother stroked her child's hair lovingly.

"Now, Rosy, it's time you were off to the school. Put on your bit of a hood and run away."

So Rosy tied on the worsted hood which her mother handed to her, and snatching a kiss from a tiny boy who sat playing on the floor, went out again.

Just as she reached Broadway, which she must cross in going to school, she saw by the timepiece in a clock-maker's window that it was already nearly nine o'clock, and she went on at a quick pace, almost running, for she had yet some squares to walk.

"Take care, Rosy, don't run over me,"

said a pleasant voice; and looking up the little girl saw her Sunday-school teacher.

"O Miss Raymond!" she exclaimed, joyfully, "I never met you in the street before, did I?"

"No, I think not. Are you going to school?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Rosy, her face changing.

"What is the matter? Don't you love to go?"

"Not to this one, Miss Raymond."

"What is wrong with this one?"

"It's so noisy; and the children wont study, and there don't seem to be anything to learn. I wish I could go to a public school. But it is getting late; I must go on."

"I will walk along with you," said

Miss Raymond. "I want to know about this. How is it that there is nothing to learn?"

"I can't tell, Miss Raymond. But if you come in with me, maybe you'll know. I don't."

"But if you want to go to a public school, Rosy, why don't you go?"

The child glanced down at her bare feet, and her clean, but patched and faded dress.

"I couldn't be with nice children when I look so bad as this," she said. "Mother wants me to go too, but we're so poor she can't afford to keep me decent. My brother Will wont work a bit now, and you know my father is blind. He goes about with his dog, selling matches and needles and such things, but he gets very





little, and mother can't go out because of the twins. They're only three months old. And then there's Bobbie, he's two years old; and 'Susy, she's five. So, you see, mother can't go out, if I go to school; and even if she could, she wouldn't earn enough to keep me fit for a good one."

"Why do you want to go to a better school so much?"

"I want to learn to be a teacher," said Rosy, eagerly. "If I could, then I'd take such good care of father and mother, and I'd buy clothes for the children, and — oh, I'd do everything!"

"How old are you, Rosy?" asked the lady, smiling.

"Nine, going on ten, ma'am."

They had by this time reached Rosy's destination, and Miss Raymond went in

with her. She did not wonder that a bright, intelligent child, fond of study, and anxious to learn as much as possible, should long for something different from this. It was already past nine o'clock, but the children were running and playing about the room while the teacher stood at her desk, faintly commanding silence in a voice which could not be heard at a distance of six feet, in the din and clamor which might almost have drowned a shout.

"It is not always like this, Rosy, is it?" asked Miss Raymond.

"No, ma'am; they will sit down pretty soon, I guess. But they will talk all day long. I don't know what ails Miss Macy, but she can't seem to keep them quiet."

Miss Raymond could see at a glance,

what ailed her. She might have been a good teacher of a well-ordered private class of pupils, but she was a weak, inefficient woman, wholly inadequate to control the turbulent young spirits congregated in the industrial school over which she had been placed.

"And you don't like all this," said Miss Raymond, looking down at the child, who still stood beside her.

"No, ma'am. I like fun as well as any of them; but it is not right to carry on so here. It's real mean to Miss Macy too. I think it kind of frightens her, poor thing."

That decided Miss Raymond. She determined that if it were possible Rosy should have a teacher whom she should

respect too much to call her "poor thing."

"Can you come to see me this afternoon, Rosy?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, I think so," said the child, her eyes dancing with delight. "I'll ask my mother."

"Very well. Come, if she can spare you, and we will have a talk about your lessons;" and, after a few minutes conversation with the unhappy teacher, the lady took her leave.

The walk to Miss Raymond's house that afternoon was very cold, but Rosy drew her thin shawl closely around her shoulders and trotted on merrily. What mattered it if it were bleak? Was she not going to hear something about a new school where she might, perhaps,

learn to be a teacher? Cold as she was, her heart was warm and glowing, and she ran on joyously in spite of the piercing wind, and the icy feeling of the pavement against her feet. By and by she reached the house, and rang the bell timidly.

"Please, sir, I'd like to see Miss Raymond," she said to the man who opened the door. "May I go up to her floor?"

"I will tell her," said the man with an amused look. "What is your name?"

"Rosy, sir."

He led her across the hall, and, pointing to a small iron grating in the floor, said, "You may sit down by the register, and warm yourself; but don't put your foot on the iron, — it is hot."

To Rosy's great surprise a soft, warm air was coming up through this hole in the floor. She held her feet over it, and by and by a drowsy feeling began to steal over her; the heated air was making her sleepy after her long walk; and when the waiter returned, having been detained to receive a messenger, he found her fast asleep.

"I didn't say anything to her, Miss Lily," he said to Miss Raymond, when she came down five minutes later. "She's taking such pure comfort there."

Rosy's head had fallen back against the chair, and her hood had slipped off leaving her flushed face fully exposed. She made a very pretty picture sitting there in the high-backed chair with her hands folded in her lap and her bare feet hanging over the register.

"Poor little child, her walk has tired her out."

The sound of voices wakened Rosy, and she sprang up, suddenly.

"Don't be frightened," said Miss Raymond, seeing that she was startled. "You fell asleep over the fire, that is all."

"Wont the gentleman be angered at me falling asleep by his stove?" said Rosy, anxiously. "He told me to wait here while he went to call you. Aint he got a queer little stove, Miss Raymond?"

"That is a register, Rosy."

"Is it? I've seen such holes in the street, by the big hotels sometimes, but such a lot of fire comes out of this, don't it? It's real nice. That's a good gentleman. Does he live on this floor?"

"No. This is my father's house, and he wants it all for his own family."

"He must be heaping rich," said Rosy, after a moment of surprised silence.

"Shall I tell you what he means to do with a part of his riches," asked Miss Raymond with a smile.

"Yes, ma'am," said Rosy, softly.

"He means to buy a dress and a shawl and a pair of shoes for a little girl who wants to go to a public school, and cannot because she has not fitting clothes."

"Not for me, Miss Raymond," said Rosy, "it can't be."

"But it can be. If your mother is willing that you should go, my father will obtain a place for you, if you will

promise to study hard, and to behave well."

"Oh, I'll be just as good, and I'll study ever so! What shall I say? It aint half enough to say thank you, is it? I'll always love you just as dear as dear can be;" and the eager, happy face pressed close to Miss Raymond in the child's delighted excitement.

She took it between her hands, as she said, "What put it into your head to want to be a teacher?"

"I don't know; but I always did want it. Margery Bray used to laugh, and say I was too romping and careless to be a teacher; but I mean to be one some of these days, and I used to tell her she'd see. Oh, I wish she was here now! I used to love to have

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her with me in Sunday school, and everywhere."

"Don't wish that, Rosy. She is so happy in heaven. She cannot come to us, but we can go to her. Are you trying to follow Margery's Master?"

"Yes, Miss Raymond, I do try. I've tried ever since she died. I think it was her made me love Him. When I was with her, it always seemed as if she was happier than me, and I wanted to be like her. I do love the dear Lord Jesus now."

"How much do you love him, Rosy? Would you be ready to give up everything for his sake?"

"Yes, I think so," said Rosy, thoughtfully.

"I hope you would, dear. Now you

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had better go home again, and I will come down and talk to your mother about the new school. Here are some little cakes for you and the other children."

Rosy took the offered bundle with many thanks, and ran off with a light heart to tell her happiness to her mother.



II

Rosy's Home.

NEVER was there a brighter face than that which Rosy wore as she ran toward home on this cold November afternoon. It was sundown before she left Miss Raymond's house, and the sun, who had hidden himself behind dark gray clouds all the afternoon, concluded to take one little peep at the earth before he went to rest. So he broke through the thick curtains which shrouded his light and shone out radiantly for a few moments.

The little girl looked up gladly to welcome the sweet sunset light, and her face seemed to catch the soft glow which fell all

around her. It hid itself among her curls, and kindled a new beauty in her sparkling eyes; and, shining upon her round cheeks, laid there lovingly, as if it could not bear to leave anything so fair and soft. And the child danced on blithely, singing as she went, and weary men and toil-worn women turned and looked after her, thanking God for the sight.

She reached her home just in time to catch up little Bob, who had toddled to the door-sill, and stepping over it on his unsteady feet, had fallen and bumped his forehead on the boards.

"There, there, never mind," said Rosy, lifting him in her arms, "never mind."

And being so often told to "never mind," Robbie concluded to obey, and, ceasing to scream, wound his chubby arms

around her neck, and put up his lips for a kiss. But the noise had awakened the twins, and a chorus of cries arose from the cradle in which they lay, their mother having gone out on an errand to the store, while they were sleeping. Rosy carried the two-year-old baby over to the cradle, and sitting down beside it tried to quiet the three-months-old babies by rocking them. But it was of no use. The two tiny faces rubbed themselves fretfully over the pillows, the four aimless fists struck out blindly at imaginary foes, and the two little bodies rolled around and doubled themselves up in angry impatience. The harder Rosy rocked, the louder the babies screamed, until, in despair, she put Rob down upon the floor, and taking a baby on each knee, trotted them up and down with all her might.

But Rob did not approve of this position of affairs. He considered Rosy's lap his especial property, and, resenting his dethronement, he seized each baby by the frock, and, dragging upon them with his whole strength, cried out, "Down, bad baby, down!"

"Don't do so, Rob!" exclaimed Rosy, hardly able to hold the children back. "You don't want to sit on Rosy's lap. You're a man."

Robbie had released his grasp at her loud exclamation, and now standing before her with his hands clasped behind his back, he tried to look defiance. But it would not do. He could not bear to see those new babies usurping his place; his lip began to quiver, two big tears rolled slowly down his face, and angrily sobbing

out, "Aint a man, aint a man a bit," the little fellow flung himself upon the floor, crying bitterly.

Rosy could not stand that. Rob had always been her special pet, and it almost broke her heart to see how grieved he was. Down went the three-months-olds into the cradle again, and Rosy threw herself down beside him.

"No, you aint a man. There now, come to your own nurse, little boy. You're nothing but my own baby."

But Robbie considered himself aggrieved, and would not relent at first. Finally, however, her coaxing, aided by one of Miss Raymond's cakes, prevailed; and when Mrs. Conroy returned, she found Rosy seated on the floor with Rob on her lap, while the twins lay in the cradle contentedly sucking their fists.

“O mother,” cried Rosy, springing up to meet her, “Miss Raymond is going to send me to a public school, and she is going to give me shoes and clothes, and she is coming to see you to-morrow to tell you all about it!” and she danced about in her delight, until Rob shouted with glee.

“What do you mean, at all, at all, Rosy? Stand quiet, and tell me what it is. Is it to the Ward-school you mean?”

“Yes, and Miss Raymond will see to my clothes, and I’ll learn to be a teacher, and I’ll take care of you and father and the twins and Rob.”

“Softly, then, softly,” said her mother, laughing at her excitement. “Miss Raymond’s a fine lady, so she is, and it’s right thankful I am to her. But you’ll have to stick close to your books then, Rosy.”

“ Yes, I know, but I can study real hard, mother. Oh, wont we have a gay time when I'm a teacher, Robbie ? ”

It had been the dream of the child's life to become a teacher, that she might help her blind father, and careworn mother ; and this new hope, that her great desire was to be granted, filled her heart with joy.

“ Isn't father late to-night,” she said, after a short silence. She wanted to tell him of this great delight.

“ He is that, and I'm getting a bit worried for him. Run you down the alley, Rosy, and sec is he coming.”

Rosy went out, but before she reached the entrance to the alley, she heard her father's cautious, slow step.

“ Is that you, father ? ” she said, for it was too dark to see him.

"It's meself," said he.

"What's kept you so late?" asked the child, taking the cord by which he held his dog, out of his hand, and leading him herself on through the darkness.

"'Twas the dog. He's sick, I'm thinkin', for he acts very queer. A good part of the forenoon he wouldn't walk at all, and I thought he'd scarce get me home, he seemed that weak in the legs."

"Why, Spot, are you sick, old fellow?" said Rosy, turning back to look at him. "Poor Spot."

The dog, who was walking slowly along behind them, wagged his tail in answer to her voice, and then lay down wearily upon the stones.

"Come, Spot. Come get your supper, old dog," said Rosy; but he did not move.

So after she had guided her father into the house, she went back. But coaxing and petting were all in vain. There he lay; he had brought his master safely home, and now that his work was done his strength had utterly failed. The tears sprang into Rosy's eyes as she looked pityingly at him while he lay panting for breath. He was a rough, coarse-looking dog, but he carried a faithful heart under his coat of stiff yellow hair, and she loved him dearly. She could not bear to leave him on the cold stones, and putting her arms around him she exerted all her strength, and, lifting him as best she could, staggered up the steps and bore him safely into the house.

"There, dear Spot," she said, "lie down by the stove and get warm."

And little Rob crept up to where he lay to pat his head and fondle him tenderly.

"Did you sell anything the day, Patrick?" asked the mother, as they sat around the table eating their supper of bread, with tea for the father and mother, and molasses for the children.

"No," said the man, sadly. "Nothing but a box of matches. It's been a sore day for me. So cold and bleak, and the dog ailing; me selling never a ha'porth but the bit of a box, and the rent so near due."

The mother sighed, and Rosy thought again of that good time coming when the rent should no longer be a burden to her blind father, when she should be the one to bear all the burdens, and to care for and

help them all. She had told him of her happiness, but he had been so worried and distressed by his unsuccessful day's work that he had not paid any heed to her story.

After supper she put the little ones to bed, while her mother rocked the babies, one in the cradle, the other on her knee; and then she crept in beside Rob, and, wrapping her arms around him, asked God to help her to study hard, and to make her able to help her father and mother.

Outside, in the front room, Patrick Conroy and his wife sat together talking hopelessly of the dark future; of their eldest boy, Will, who idled about day after day, refusing to work, and coming home only to eat and sleep; of the great loss which they should suffer if their sick dog should

die ; of the coming winter which promised to be so severe, and of all the hundred cares and troubles which beset a poor man with a family of young children ; while within lay the child, her heart in a flutter of joy and happiness, looking forward to that same future which to her imagination seemed so bright and joyous.

III.

A Useless Plea.

ROSY had been sound asleep, dreaming of her new school, when she was suddenly wakened by a sharp cry. She started up hastily, thinking at first that Robbie had called out; but the little fellow lay quietly beside her. As she raised her head to listen, she heard a low, moaning sound coming from the outer room, and, softly creeping from her bed, she went to see what was the matter. Her heart was beating very fast, for in her pleasant dreams she had forgotten Spot, and she feared that the cry of pain had come from her father or mother. But

when she glided softly through the door of the closet in which she slept, she found only the dog awake in the larger room. Her parents were sleeping heavily after their day's work, while Will lay curled up in a corner in a sound slumber.

But there was one pair of eyes which greeted her as she stole across the floor, and poor Spot's tail wagged feebly as she approached him. He lay stretched out before the stove, with his head thrown back, moaning piteously.

"Poor dog," said Rosy, sitting down upon the floor beside him. "Dear old Spot."

He looked up wistfully into her face, and, as she sat and stroked his head, his moans ceased, and at last he grew so

quiet that Rosy crept back to her bed once more. But she no longer dreamed happy dreams. Spot's groans and cries were woven into all her thoughts; and she was tossing restlessly, muttering and sobbing when her mother came to wake her in the morning.

"What is it, Rosy?" said Mrs. Conroy, putting back the tumbled hair from the child's face. "What makes you fret?"

"I don't know, only I had bad dreams. I thought Spot was dead."

"No, he's not dead, but he's far gone with the wakeness. You can hear the laments of him all over the house, he cries that sore. Come, get you dressed and run in to Mrs. O'Brien's. She's very knowledgeable on dogs, and maybe she can tell me what I'd best do for him

Hist, Rosy, be quiet like, or you'll waken the boy."

Robbie's hands had grasped her sleeve. Half-awakened by their voices, he had roused himself enough to say, "Stay to Robbie," and then sunk back into sleep, but holding her fast the while. Mrs. Conroy gently unclasped the tiny fingers, and Rosy proceeded to make herself ready to go for Mrs. O'Brien. When she came out into the front room she found her mother bending anxiously over the dog.

"I'm thinking you'll have to go out with the father the day, Rosy," said she.

"O mother! Miss Raymond is coming to-day!"

"Ah, child, I'm afeared she'll come for nought. If the dog dies, as I fear me he will, for he's took very bad, you'll have to lead the father."

Rosy stood still in silent dismay. If she must take her father out on his daily rounds, all her dearly-cherished plans and hopes must be given up. It seemed too hard a thing to think of.

“O, Mother,” she said, “I *must* go to school, else I’ll never learn to be a teacher. Don’t make me go with father,” and her eyes, brimming with tears, were lifted pleadingly to her mother’s face.

“And would I ask it from you if I could help it, Rosy? Sare and it’s been the hope of me life that you should get larnin’, but what’ll we do if the father don’t sell nothing? And how can he go his lone?”

“But Will might take him, mother.”

“If he would, he might; but he’s that contrairy and that set in his ways that

I'm afeared he'll not go for our asking. But if you like you could try, Rosy dear."

All the while that she was setting the table for breakfast, dressing the two smaller children and tending the babies, while her mother cut the bread and made the tea, Rosy was trying to make up her mind as to the most successful way of coaxing Will. He had been an unkind, cross brother to her, and she was somewhat afraid of him; but it was such a hard trial to give up the new hope which had arisen in her heart that she was willing to brave the chance of a sharp refusal. She could not decide on the way to approach the subject, and breakfast was over before she had summoned courage to speak to him. He was

leaving the room, when, feeling that this was her last chance, she stopped him.

"Will, can't you go out with father, to-day?"

"Go out with him? What, pilot him about the street with his basket of traps? I guess I wont. Go with him yourself."

"But, Will, I can't go every day. If Spot dies somebody must go with father always; and if you wont, I'll have to give up my school."

"Who cares if you do! School aint no good."

"Yes, it is. And Miss Raymond is going to take me to a public school, where I can learn to be a teacher; and O Will, I can't bear to give it up. Do please go."

She had crept up very close to him

her flushed cheeks and quivering lips adding their entreaty to her words; but the boy's heart was very hard, and when she laid an eager hand upon his coat-sleeve in her earnestness, he flung it off, saying roughly, "Don't give it up then. Let him get along the best way he can. I aint going about the streets playing dog to a blind man."

It was a hopeless case, and poor Rosy felt it so.

"Oh, you bad, bad boy!" she cried out passionately, and as she spoke, she struck him on the arm.

He started forward to return the blow, and Rosy might have suffered a severe punishment for her fault if her mother had not stepped between her and his angry hand.

“Don’t lift a finger to her,” said Mrs. Conroy, pushing Will aside hastily. “She says true, you are a bad boy, and a shame to the mother what reared you, to speak in such fashion of your own father because the Lord’s afflicted him. Go you out this minute, and don’t you dare to raise your hand to Rosy.”

With a hard laugh the boy turned away, while his mother tried to soothe and comfort the sobbing child.

The father had been out during this scene, and now, hearing his returning step, Rosy lifted her face from her mother’s breast and tried to choke back her tears.

“There, then, darlin’,” said Mrs. Conroy, cheerily. “Don’t fret no more. May be Spot’ll be a deal easier the night when you come home. Keep up a good heart, Rosy.”



IV.

Repentance.

COME, little woman," said her father, as he entered the room, "it is high time we were off. You must take care of the blind-man to-day."

If there were in the child's heart any lingering reluctance to yield her own will, her father's allusion to himself as "the blind-man" scattered it at once. She sprang up quickly, and slipping her hand into his, said, "I'm ready, father. I'll be a first-rate leader for you."

So they went out together; the father, with his basket filled with papers of pins, cord, etc., hanging on his arm, holding by

the hand his little child, whose bright eyes were to be a light in his darkness through all the weary march of the long day.

But although Rosy went with a willing heart to her task, she was very quiet and subdued, walking by his side as gravely as a woman. Once before, she had led him out on his daily round, but then she had skipped along laughing and talking merrily, or singing snatches of sweet songs and hymns, until her joyousness had so infected him that his day's labor seemed only a pastime. But to-day she was very still, scarcely speaking except when he addressed her. He did not wonder at that however, for his own heart was sad as he thought of his faithful guide and companion, lying before the stove at home, probably dying, and he knew that Rosy loved the old dog dearly.

But while Rosy thought sorrowfully of Spot, there was another sore trouble weighing upon her mind, and making her usually bright face so solemn. If the pain which she felt had been only in her heart, she might have forgotten her own grief in that of her father, and have tried to cheer and comfort him; but she had something worse to bear. Her conscience was hard at work. The angry words which she had spoken to Will, the blow which she had given him, rested heavily upon it, and it could not rest. In vain she told herself that Will was a cruel, unkind boy, and that it was very wicked for him to speak as he had done of his blind father. That was all true; but she felt that it made her sin none the less. She had no right to

strike him because he was wicked; and she knew full well, hard as she tried to excuse herself, that it was passion, and nothing else, which had led her to speak and act as she had done.

And then another thought came up to add to her sorrow. She had been very much in earnest when she told Miss Raymond that she was trying to be a Christian. She had tried faithfully to follow the dear Saviour whom she truly loved, and she had begun to hope that she might yet lead Will to him. Disobedient as he was to his parents, roughly as he often spoke to the younger children, he had certainly been somewhat more gentle with her of late, and she had thought that if she bore patiently with his faults she might, by God's help, in-

duce him to live a better life. She had made a great effort; many and many a time, she had resolutely kept back the sharp retort which rose to her lips, and struggled against the anger which his conduct roused within her; she had fought hard, and she had hoped that the victory was not far off. But now, all was lost. After all her self-restraint and patience, she had quarrelled with him, and had even struck the first blow. She knew that the very fact of her long forbearance only made this outbreak stand out in bolder contrast, and she felt sure that any new effort she might make to win him to a Christian life, would be met by some allusion to her own misconduct; for Will knew that Rosy had chosen the Saviour for her Master and

was trying to follow him. The little heart grew more troubled, and the young face more grave, as she walked on, thinking of all this.

By and by her restless conscience set a new thought before her, with very disagreeable vividness. She felt that she ought to ask her brother's pardon. That was a hard thing to do. He had been so unkind; it was his fault that the quarrel had arisen; it seemed as if she could not do it. No; she would be gentle and pleasant when she saw him again, but she would not ask his forgiveness. But conscience is a severe taskmaster when it has a certain work to do in a tender heart; and Rosy's would not content itself with such a half-way measure as that, and it stung her so sharply that it

brought the tears to her eyes, and made her lip quiver with distress. Her pride would not let her yield even while she knew that she could not be at peace until she did so.

It was a hard-fought battle, and lasted through all the morning, but finally poor Rosy's pride was vanquished, and with an earnest but silent prayer for strength, she resolved to do even this for her master.

Her mind once made up, her heart grew lighter. She had been so engrossed with her own painful thoughts, that she had scarcely noticed her father. She had led him to the different places to which he directed her, and stood beside him while he offered his wares for sale ; but she had paid no attention to what passed around her, farther than that. Now, as she looked up at him, she saw that his face was very sad,

and noticed that his step was slow and weary.

"How much have you sold, father?" she asked him.

"Only eight cents' worth, all this long day."

Rosy started. She knew that when they left home a small half-loaf of bread was all the food that remained in the house. That must have been eaten by this time, and they had not yet made enough to buy another loaf.

"Oh, we must get ten cents, at least," she said; and taking some cards of hooks and eyes from the basket, she held them out to the passers-by, begging them to purchase something of her.

Pressing forward in her eagerness to gain enough to feed the hungry children at home,

she left her father standing on the corner, and turned into the next street.

“Please, sir, buy some cards,” she said to a gentleman who passed her.

He put a penny into her hand, and went on.

Another and another hurried on unheeding, and Rosy was on the point of turning back in despair, when a lady approached. Many had passed as she stood there, but something in the look of this new-comer gave the child confidence.

“Please, ma’am,” she said, drawing nearer to her.

“I have nothing for you,” said the lady.

“I don’t want to beg, ma’am,” said Rosy, keeping close by her side; “but I do want to sell these cards so very bad.”

“Oh, that is it, is it? Well, give me one.”

"Four cents they are, ma'am."

The lady handed her ten cents.

"Could you wait one minute while I run to my father for the change? He is standing on the next corner."

"No, never mind. You may keep it."

"Oh, thank you, ma'am. It'll buy us bread for supper," and Rosy ran back to her father with the load lifted from her heart.

It was nearly dusk, and they had a long walk before them; so they turned toward home, offering their little articles to all whom they met on their way; but no one bought. The eighteen cents was the whole profit of the day's labor.

V.

A Bitter Grief.

ROSY was disappointed when they reached home, to find that Will was not there. She had resolved to tell him at once how sorry she was that she had been so passionate in the morning, and she wanted to relieve her burdened conscience without delay. But the instant that her eye fell on Spot, her whole heart turned to him, and she forgot Will and all her trouble on his account as she knelt down beside the dog.

He was lying where she had left him in the morning, gasping convulsively for breath ; but when he heard the step of his

master and his little friend he opened his eyes; and as Rosy threw herself upon the floor beside him, he staggered to his feet, and sank down again with his head upon her lap.

"Mother, he's dying," said Rosy, for even her unpractised sight noticed the glaze on the soft eyes as they looked wistfully into her face.

"Don't let him die, mother; can't you help him?"

"And would'nt I give him the help if I had it, then," said the mother. "He's beyond me entirely, so he is, poor thing."

The blind man came with his slow step across the room, and bending down, laid his hand upon the head of his faithful companion.

"Good Spot," he said, in a quivering

voice. "It's a true friend you've been to me. But we'll never tramp the streets together again, old boy, never."

The dog tried to lick the caressing hand, and then his eyes raised themselves again to Rosy's face with a look which seemed to speak almost in living words, so full of love and longing was it.

And the child sat gazing at him with flushed cheeks and tearless eyes. There was a great grief tugging at her heart-strings. It was not only that her dog, the friend of her babyhood, who had grown up with her, loved almost as dearly as her sisters and brothers, lay dying, but all her hopes and wishes were dying with him, — the hopes which she had cherished for years, and which last night had seemed so near their fulfilment. It seemed to her

as if the world had suddenly grown cold and chill, and God and heaven were far, far away; and wearied with her day's toil, disheartened by ill-success, she felt as if Spot's death would be the one drop which was needed to fill the full cup to overflowing.

She had not long to wait for that last drop of sorrow. The yearning look in those glazing eyes grew more intense; suddenly the dog sprung to his feet, and laid his nose upon her neck, pressing close to her as if to seek protection from the icy hand which grasped his heart. Rosy clasped her arms around him, hiding her face against his head, and with a strong, hard shudder, old Spot drew his last breath.

It was a sad group upon which his

dying eyes closed. The blind man with his sightless eyes turned away, as if even his blindness could not shut out the mournful picture; the mother, with her apron thrown over her head, crying bitterly; Susy, leaning upon her father's knee, turning away, like him, from the cruel sight; and Rob, with his hand on Rosy's shoulder, gazing in awe-struck, silent grief, at his playmate; while Rosy — Spot's favorite among them all — looked on with burning, dry eyes, clasping him tightly in her loving arms, as if she would hold him back from the death which was dragging him from her.

By and by Mrs. Conroy moved away from the sorrowful group, and began to make preparations for their simple supper.

"Come," she said, when it was ready ;
"come and eat a bit before we go to
our beds."

But no one was hungry. Even little
Robbie, whose chubby hands were gen-
erally only too eager to grasp at any-
thing eatable, turned away from the
slice of bread that his mother offered
him, sobbing out, "Robbie don't want
bread ; Robbie wants Spot to open his
eyes."

The mother was putting away the
almost untasted supper, when Will came
in.

"O Will," said Robbie, running tow-
ard him, "Spot wont look at his own
boy."

Will crossed the room to where Rosy
sat with the dog's head still pillowed
on her lap.

“Is the brute dead?” he asked, roughly.

She did not answer, but his mother said, “Speak softer, Will. Yes, he’s dead, poor fellow.”

He walked away to the table without another word, and took up the loaf of bread which still lay there; but throwing it instantly down, said, “That bread is stale.”

“We can’t buy fresh bread,” said Mrs. Conroy. “It makes more waste than this.”

“I should think when you give a fellow nothing but dry bread, it might as well be fresh,” said he, sullenly.

Rosy looked up with flashing eyes. There were angry words on her lips,

but the next moment she bent her head down again without speaking.

"You might have what you like to eat, if you chose, Will," said the father. "'Tis your own fault you live so poor. You ought to work and earn wages like an honest man."

"I aint going to work for nobody," said Will; "so there's no use talking."

"You needn't tell us that," said Rosy, turning upon him suddenly. "We all know that though you're a big, strong fellow, you're just mean enough to steal your living from your poor blind father, rather than work for yourself!"

She was trembling with passion as she stood before him, with her eyes fixed on his sullen face.

Will looked at her for a moment with

a sneering smile, and then moved away, saying, "This is your second fury to-day. You're getting mighty pious, aint you?"

The child's whole aspect changed instantly. Her upraised hand fell slowly to her side, her eye lost its indignant flash, and, without answering a single word, she took Robbie by the hand and went away into the closet in which they slept; and when she had undressed the boy, and laid him in the bed, she laid down beside him, and cried as if her heart would break. Her first impulse to resentment had been controlled, but the second had been stronger, and had overcome her before she had time to resist it; and she had given Will an opportunity to sneer at her efforts to

follow in the footsteps of her Master. Poor little child! those fast flowing tears were very bitter.

By and by, when she had cried herself into a more quiet state of feeling, she began to think what it was best for her to do. It was harder now than ever to ask Will's pardon, and yet she could not still that voice within, which urged her to the task. For a long while she lay there thinking. All was still in the outer room, and she tried to persuade herself that Will was asleep, and would be angry if she waked him, and she tried to sleep, too. But it would not do. That small voice whispered, at first in low tones, then louder and louder, until at last, with a sudden resolution, she rose from the bed, knelt

down for one moment to ask her Saviour for the help she needed to do his will, and then crept out into the front room. Will was sitting before the stove. He raised his head with a start when he heard the patter of her bare feet on the boards.

"What are you about? Go back to your bed," he said, sharply.

"I will in a moment," she said, humbly. "We must talk softly, or we'll wake father and mother. I'm so sorry that I was cross and angry to-day. Will you forgive me?"

"Humph," said the boy, "that's all very well. You're mighty sorry now, but the next time you fly into a passion it'll be the same old story. You get into a tantrum, and hit or knock

me as you like, and think that all you've got to do is to come crying, and say, 'Please forgive me,' " and he imitated the tremulous tones of her voice. "No, I wont forgive you. I don't believe in your kind of pious. Go off to bed."

"O Will, please do," she said, beseechingly.

"I wont. There, do you hear what I say. Now go, or I'll make you."

He started up with a threatening gesture, and, frightened by his angry manner, she fled back into her closet.

VI.

Rosy a Tradeswoman.

THE sound of voices loud in dispute mixed itself with Rosy's morning dreams, and the noise of a heavy fall made her start up in her bed with sudden terror. At first she could not tell whether it had been all a dream or not, but the next moment her mother's voice called her in a quick, frightened tone, and running into the front room, with her heart beating fast with fear, she found her father lying upon the floor, and her mother kneeling beside him, trying to raise him in her arms.

“O, mother,” cried Rosy, “is father dead, too?”

"No, child. The Lord be praised for sparing us that."

"No, Rosy, it's nothing very bad," said the father cheerfully. "I'm thinking my ankle's got a sprain, or the likes of it," and he tried to lift himself to his feet. But the effort gave him such pain that he sank back with a groan.

"How did he happen to fall?" asked Rosy, as she gently wiped away the great drops which stood on his forehead.

"'Twas Will did it," said the mother. "Your father bade him bide at home the morn till it was time for him to go out with his wares; but Will wouldn't hearken to it. He wouldn't do so much as to lead him to a good corner, so that you might go to your school; and the father was sore angered. They got into high words, and

when Will tried to pass the door, the father laid hold on him, and between them, I don't rightly know how it was, he fell over the step here with his foot bent under him. Oh, dear, what'll we do at all with the father laid by ? ”

“ Never mind, mother dear,” said Rosy, as Mrs. Conroy took up the corner of her apron to wipe away the tears which were rolling slowly down her face. “ You mustn't get discouraged.”

“ But child there's never a cent in the house, and your father may lie for weeks afore he can put his foot to the ground ; and there's six hungry mouths to feed.”

“ We'll see and get something to fill them, mother. Don't be afraid. Let me go out with father's basket to-day. Maybe I can sell a little.”

"Dear heart," said the mother, tenderly. "But I'd be afeared to have you go out your lone, Rosy."

"God wont let any harm happen me."

"No more he wouldn't then, and you working for the father and mother and the little ones."

They had succeeded in lifting the blind man into a chair, and while Mrs. Conroy bound up the injured foot, Rosy went back to Robbie who was fretting and crying in the closet.

She had spoken cheerfully to her mother, for her warm, loving heart was full of pity for her, but she had said what she did because she wanted to console her, not because she felt the comfort in her own soul. She had said that God would watch over her, and yet she felt as if she could

not find God that morning ; and her whole heart was roused again, against the brother whose wickedness had made so much suffering for them all.

An hour later Rosy went out with her father's basket on her arm ; for the children, hungry after the fast of the past evening, had eaten so heartily that but little was left for the mid-day meal.

If the many, many people who passed the corner of Fourteenth Street and Broadway, on that bright Saturday, could have looked into the heart of the child who stood there quietly offering for sale her papers of pins and cards of buttons, they would have paused and tried to do something toward lightening its load of care. But if Rosy's basket had been filled with money, that would have lifted but a part

of the load from her spirit, for the heaviest weight resting there was a burden of angry, resentful feeling. Yesterday she had gone through a hard struggle with her conscience; but to-day she would not listen for a moment to its suggestions, and every time that it raised its voice, telling her that she ought to forgive her brother, she answered it angrily, saying, that she had done all that she could; she had asked his pardon, and he had unkindly refused it, and she could not and would not forgive his cruelty to her blind father. So she stood there brooding over all the trouble that he had caused, until her whole soul was full of bitterness, and her usually bright face clouded and saddened.

It was growing late, and the crowd of people passing up and down began

to thin somewhat, but still the child stood patiently holding out her cards. By and by a big boy turned the corner; he stopped beside her, and suddenly striking her basket with his elbow, upset it on the walk, and with a loud laugh ran off.

“Just like a boy,” said Rosy to herself as she picked up the scattered articles. “All boys are horrid!”

A remorseful thought of Robbie with his pretty prattle and sweet ways, came across her mind, as she made that strong assertion; and the next moment she doubted again whether it was quite a fair condemnation, for a pleasant, hearty voice said, —

“Hallo, Rosy, is this you? Where’s your father?”

“He’s home,” said Rosy. “He’s had a fall and lamed his foot.”

"My! That's bad, aint it? But what's happened to your basket? Your things are all in a mess."

"I know it. A boy knocked it over."

"Did he do it o' purpose?"

"Yes. Wasn't it mean?"

"Mean! I wish I'd been here to catch him. I reckon he wouldn't have wanted to see Ned Dolan very soon again. You look right tired. Sit down on my foot-block, and I'll try to sell some for you."

He placed the block upon its side on the pavement, and, seating her upon it, turned away with her basket in his hand.

"Buttons! Buttons! Buy my nice buttons! Strong and good, and wash first-rate!" called Ned's clear voice.

And many turned to listen to it, there was such an honest, manly ring in it.

Some did more than pause to listen; and when Ned pointed toward the child sitting close at hand, and told them that her father was blind and lame, and that she had stood there all day long trying to earn a little money to buy bread, he found that there were some generous hearts among his hearers, and the pennies and other small pieces of money fell quite plentifully into the basket. By and by, he came back to where Rosy was sitting.

"I've got a heap of coppers," said he. "Let's count up and see how much you've made altogether."

She gave him the hoard which she had put carefully into the bosom of her dress, and he proceeded to count it.

"One dollar and eighteen cents. That's pretty good, aint it?"

"One dollar and eighteen cents!" repeated Rosy, in amazement. "Why, Ned, that can't be!"

"Yes, it can. You gave me thirty cents, and I got the rest. One old gent gave me a twenty-five, and a little chap gave me two tens when I told them that your father was blind; and the rest came from one and another, you know. Take it, it's yours."

"But, Ned, you ought to have part, because you sold the things."

"No, I oughtn't; and besides, I didn't sell much, they mostly gave it. Come on. Let's start for home."

Rosy put the money carefully away, telling him over and over again how much she thanked him, and they turned toward home, Ned carrying her basket as well as his own block.

"I say, Rosy," said the boy, after they had walked some distance, "there's somethin' ailin' you. What is it?"

"Oh, I don't know, only it seems as if every one was bad except father and mother and the children, and you, Ned. You are good."

"Me good," said the boy, bending eagerly forward. "Do you think that? Honest, now Rosy."

"Yes, I guess I do think so," said Rosy, so earnestly that Ned had no chance to doubt her.

"I've been trying for it," said he, thoughtfully. "I've been trying for it right hard, but I don't think it's come yet."

"You're real good to me, any way,"

and Rosy drew closer to him, and slipped her hand through his arm.

"P'raps I am to you. But, Rosy, its so mighty hard to be good when all the other fellows are bad."

"Yes, Ned, it's very hard. Some days are so different from other days, too. Now sometimes I feel as if I loved God so much that I'd do anything he wants; and then other days he seems far away from me, and everything goes wrong, and I feel cross and wicked all the time. Do you feel that way?"

"Yes, and that's why I think I can't be good yet. Aint it queer, Rosy? I wonder what makes it."

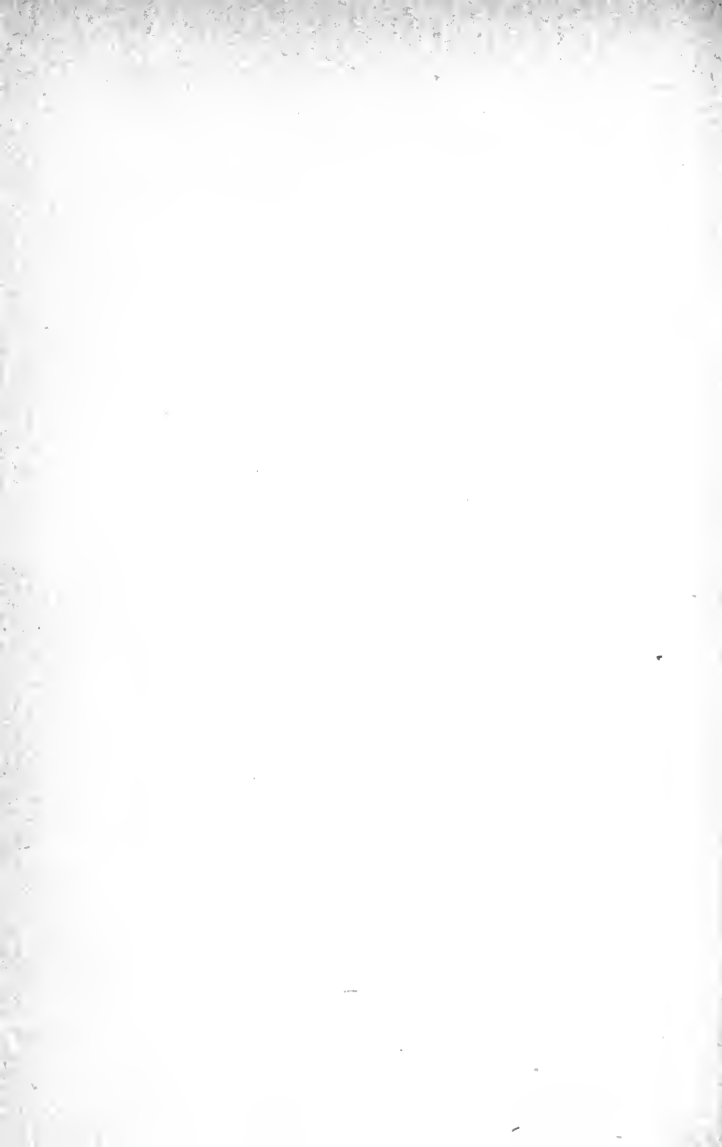
"I don't know," said she, "but I wish things were different."

"So do I; but I aint again' to give

over trying, that's sure," said Ned.
"Are you, Rosy?"

"No," said Rosy, as she turned into the court which led to her home; but there was no heartiness in her tone.

The little girl was in danger that night. She had allowed a spirit of unforgiving anger to take possession of her heart, and it was blinding her to all that was fair and sweet in her life, and opening her eyes to all that was dark and dreary.





VII.

The Armor buckled on.

MISS RAYMOND'S class in Sunday school was usually very quiet and attentive, her only difficulty being Rosy Conroy's irresistible inclination to laugh at any little circumstance which struck her as amusing. Miss Raymond had no desire to repress the child's love of mirth, but the fun and merriment which seemed always bubbling up within her, sometimes broke out in a bright sparkle, as if it could not be restrained, even in the midst of the lessons for the day.

For some weeks past, however, Rosy

had been very attentive, and her teacher had not found it necessary to check her laughter; but on the Sabbath following the day of her father's accident she was more than quiet. Her usually eager greeting was dull and listless, and during the singing of the hymns, in which she generally joined with such keen pleasure, she sat looking silently down upon her book; and all through the lesson her manner was the same.

She was about to leave the class when the school was dismissed, but Miss Raymond laid her hand upon her shoulder, and said, "Can you wait one moment, Rosy? I want to speak to you."

"What troubles you to-day?" she asked, drawing her toward her when

the other girls had left the seat. "I never saw you look so grave before."

Rosy's tears lay as near the surface as her smiles, and the gentle voice and words brought them into her eyes at once.

"I don't know," she said, "unless it's because every one is ugly and wicked."

Miss Raymond moved so as to shield her from observation, then she said, —

"What makes you think that everybody is ugly and wicked, Rosy?"

"Oh, a great many things. Will behaves shamefully. He wont work, and he's bad to father. Yesterday he was quarrelling with him, and somehow father fell, and he's sprained his foot. He's a dreadful boy!"

"And do you try to do him all the good you can?"

"He wont let me do him any good! I've tried and tried, and it aint any use. I'm not going to try any more!"

"We wont talk about that just now," said Miss Raymond. "I think that my little Rosy wants comforting, and I had rather do that. Now try to tell me just how you feel, and let us see if I can help you."

Rosy's manner had been angry and excited when speaking of Will, but it changed instantly.

"I can't tell how I feel," she said, looking up at her teacher with her face all trembling with emotion; "but I'm afraid I don't love my Saviour, after all."

"What makes you think so, Rosy?"

You told me only a day or two ago that you did love him."

"I know I did, and I thought so then; but everything seems different now. Sometimes I felt as if he was close by, and I was so glad to think he was so near me; but now he seems so far, so very far away, and, oh, I do feel so lonely!" and she hid her face against Miss Raymond's arm, sobbing bitterly.

"Did you say your prayers this morning, Rosy?"

"Yes, but it didn't do a bit of good."

"Did you say, 'Our Father which art in heaven?'"

"Yes, ma'am, I always say that."

"Did you think of any one whom you needed to forgive, when you said, 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?'"

Rosy looked as if she did not quite comprehend; but all at once the full meaning of the question flashed across her mind.

"O Miss Raymond!" she said, hastily, "I never thought of all that meant, before."

"I was afraid that you had not, Rosy. That is a very solemn petition. This morning you asked God to forgive your sins as you forgive the sins of others. Do you want him to answer that prayer; to forgive you as you forgive your brother?"

"No, no! I never meant that. Indeed, I didn't!"

"I don't suppose you did, dear. But we must never ask God to do anything for us unless we fully mean all that we say. Now let us talk about your trouble. Here is a child who has a loving father

and mother, three dear little sisters, and one of the sweetest little brothers ever seen; yet this same child tells me that every one is ugly and wicked. Because she has one bad brother she turns away from the precious thought of all the other dear friends whom God has given her, and nurses up her feelings of anger and impatience until she almost forgets that there is any sunshine at all in the world. This is very sinful, Rosy. You are wronging your dear ones at home; you are wronging me; and, worse than all, you are wronging God."

Poor Rosy felt as if this were laying a very heavy weight of blame upon her shoulders; but the rebuking voice was gentle, and the hand which held hers was very tender in its touch.

I couldn't help it," she said, piteously. "I did try to be good to him when he was bad to me. I did forgive him when he was cross about the school and wouldn't let me go, though I wanted to so bad; and I begged his pardon for being naughty to him. But when he behaves so to father and mother I can't bear it. They're so good to him. Mother always keeps a big bit of bread for him, never mind how pinched we are; and father scarcely ever scolds him. I can't be forgiving and forgiving all the time, and he never a bit the better for it."

"Suppose that God said he could not be forgiving and forgiving all the time, where would my Rosy be?"

The child was silent, and Miss Raymond went on. "The reason that you

feel so lonely, Rosy,—so far away from God,—is that you are keeping in your heart feelings that he does not love. Gentle Jesus cannot stay in a heart that is full of anger and bitterness. They crowd him out, and he turns sadly away, thinking that his little lamb is wandering away from him. Does this little lamb mean to let him go from her, and leave her to lose herself in the wilderness; or, does she mean to drive these wicked feelings out of her heart and take him in again, to be her joy and comfort?"

"I know that it is very difficult," she continued, after pausing a moment for an answer, "very difficult, indeed, to forgive any one who abuses those we love; but Jesus Christ came to die for those who had rebelled against his Father, and can-

not you be patient with one who sins against your father? It grieves the blessed Saviour to see that after he has forgiven you so much, you are so angry with your brother. You do not want to grieve him, do you, Rosy?"

"No, I don't, indeed I don't! But, Miss Raymond, it's so hard!"

"I know it is, my darling, I know it is; but you must go to Jesus for the strength you need for such a task. A feeble little girl like you could never carry such a weight alone, but there is One who will carry it for you. When you find that anything is too hard for you, take it to the Lord Jesus, and he will make it easy for his little child. He knew just how weak and tempted you were, when he told you to forgive

even as you wanted to be forgiven; he saw too that you were not strong enough to do it alone; but then he knew that he was able to help you, and that, weak as you were, you could do all things through him. Do you not believe that, Rosy?"

"Yes; but then, Miss Raymond, it's so much easier to feel it when I'm sitting here by you, while you tell me all about it. When I go home and see how unhappy mother looks, and see poor father sitting with his foot up on a chair and his face so troubled and anxious, it is very different. Then all the good feelings go away, and I get so vexed at Will, I don't know what to do. If I could only stay in Sunday school with you all the time, I'm sure I'd be a better girl."

“But your Master does not want you to do that, Rosy. He wants you to go out into the world and work for him. He does not mean that you shall be a drone in this busy hive; he has work for his little servant to do. Suppose that one of our soldiers should fall out of the ranks as the army was marching to battle, and, sitting down in some pleasant, sunny spot, should say, ‘I love my country very much, so I mean to sit quietly here, and just think how grand she is, and how much I love to serve her;’ what sort of a soldier would that be? Wouldn’t he show his love more by standing up face to face with the enemies of his country, and fighting for her with all his strength and might? Of course he would; and so will my Rosy show her love for

her Master by fighting in the ranks of his army. We want to sit down sometimes in the sunny nook to think of him, but it must be after the battle is fought. Isn't that so, little soldier?"

"I guess it is," said Rosy, with sudden animation. "It's lazy to rest before you work, isn't it? I'm real glad I told it all to you, Miss Raymond. I feel so much better."

"Can you forgive Will now, Rosy?"

"I'll try very hard," she said, rather tremulously. "And God will forgive me, wont he?"

"Yes, dear. And if you try to be kind to your brother, all these angry, wicked feelings which have shut the door of your heart against the dear Saviour

will pass away, and Jesus will come in again to make it glad."

"Then I'll be so happy again, wont I? I am real sorry I said I wasn't going to try to do Will good any more. I will try again as much as ever I can. If I don't do what I can for him, that wont be forgiving like I want God to forgive me, — will it?"

"No, it would not. Is Will at home now, Rosy?"

"No, ma'am. He hasn't been at home since he pushed father down. I suppose he's afraid to come back."

"Do you know where he is?"

"No, ma'am; mother tried to find out this morning, but she couldn't. I — I" — Rosy's face crimsoned as she hesitated.

"Could you have found him if you would, Rosy?"

"Maybe some of the boys could have told me if I had asked, but — but — O Miss Raymond, I felt as if I couldn't bear to see him this morning. But that is all gone now," she continued in a steadier tone; "I'll try this afternoon to find him; and if I do, I'll see and win him home. I truly will."

"I know you will," said Miss Raymond. "I see that the little soldier has buckled on her armor, and means to fight her battles bravely. But she must not forget to keep close to her Captain."

"No, I wont forget," said Rosy, thoughtfully. "I don't think I could let him go again, I've been so miserable without him."

And with her young heart full to overflowing with its new-found peace and joy, the child went out on her mission.



VIII.

“Joe Turner’s.”

NOW Susy, we must run along as fast as we can,” said Rosy to her little sister, who had been waiting patiently for her during her long conversation with Miss Raymond; “mother will wonder what has become of us. Isn’t it a beautiful afternoon? It makes one feel so bright and nice.”

“Why, Rosy,” said Susy, looking at her in amazement, “when we were coming to school, I said it was nice, and you said ‘I don’t think so. It’s horrid cold.’”

“Did I?” said Rosy, laughing merrily. “I don’t think it is horrid now, anyway.

Maybe I've got warmed up. I feel real good. Let's skip."

So they twined their arms around one another, and away they went down the street with that peculiar, dancing motion which always tells us that a happy heart wings the light-springing foot. The little feet never "skip" when the heart is sad.

"There's Ned," said Rosy, as they approached the entrance to the court, and saw Ned Dolan standing near it, "he's just the one I want."

"Ned," — motioning him away from the knot of boys with whom he was talking, — "I'd like to speak to you."

"What is it?" said he, sauntering slowly toward her.

"Do you know where Will is?"

"No; but I guess I could hunt him up. I saw him this morning down at Joe Turner's."

"With that bad boy? Why he's a thief, aint he?"

"Yes. I tried to make Will come home, but he said your father was so angered at him he wouldn't let him in."

"Don't you think maybe he'd come if I went after him?"

"You! Why it's away across town, 'most down to the river; and an awful bad place, too. You couldn't go."

"Wouldn't you go with me, and take care of me, Ned?" She came closer, and looked up at him coaxingly. "I think I could win him back; and I'm so afraid he'll get into trouble there."

"I shouldn't think you'd want him

back. He's ugly enough to you when he's here. I'd let him bide away."

"Oh, no, Ned, that isn't right. That isn't the way we want God to do to us when we do wrong. Wont you take me?"

"'Course I will if you're set on goin'. But supposin' he aint there? He may be off t'other end of the city by this time."

"Then we'll be off to the other end, too," said Rosy, laughing. "We'll be as smart as he is. We'll find him, and bring him safe home."

"Come along, then. I guess I can travel as far as you can. Seems to me you've brightened up considerable since last night. You didn't look much like laughin' then."

"Shall I tell you the reason, Ned? Don't you know you said last night that

you wasn't going to give up trying to be good? I'm afraid I had given up trying just then; and that was why I felt so miserable. But I've begun again; and the first thing is to find Will, and to be kind to him."

"I see," said Ned, thoughtfully. "Come on. I'm ready for that job."

"Wait one minute till I tell mother," — and away she ran.

"How late you are, Rosy," said Mrs. Conroy, as the child sprang into the room, and pausing for one instant to snatch up Rob, and for another to kiss her father, finally reached her mother's side. "What kept you?"

"I was talking to Miss Raymond," said Rosy.

"And she's sent you home bright and

cheery again, eh? Sure and I thought some fairy'd been and changed my laughing Rosy for a sad-faced girl. But the light's come back to your eye again, darlint, so it has;" and the mother took the smiling face between her hands and kissed it fondly.

"The light isn't in your eyes, mother," said Rosy, as she noticed her troubled look. "You're tired with the twins and Rob."

"I'm tired with a heavier load than either the twins or my little man, dear. It's Will that's weighing on me. Two days and a night he's been away; and if he bides from me another night, and me not knowing where he is, alive or dead, I'll just go distracted. If I could only walk good, I'd leave the house and the children with you and the father, and go

after him till I found him. But I fail so soon at the walking, it aint no use to try."

"Let me go, mother. I'll bring him home."

"No, child, he's too rough with you. If you went nigh him, he'd be just like to fetch you a blow. Where would you go to find him?"

"Ned Dolan will help me. Let me go, mother, dear, and if I stay late don't you be worried, because he'll be with me. We'll coax Will home, I guess."

"You blessed little child," said the mother, and, wrapping her up warmly as their scanty wardrobe would allow, she sent her on her way.

"No, Rosy, no," protested Rob, as he saw her about to leave him again; "stay to your boy."

"I'll be back soon, Rob. I'm going for Will," said Rosy, pausing at the door.

"Don't want Will, bad Will," replied Robbie, with a trembling quaver in his voice.

"Maybe he'll be good when he comes home again. Robbie must pet him and love him."

But he shook his head at that idea, and the difficulty of Rosy's task was almost doubled by hearing him cry out, with a heartbroken sob, as she closed the door, "Bad, bad Rosy, leave Rob!"

At first it seemed as if she must go back,—as if it were too hard to grieve her dear little Robbie for Will's sake; but the next moment she had conquered herself, and, running quickly up the alley, she joined Ned Dolan.

“Joe Turner’s” was by no means a safe or pleasant place for any child to visit, as Rosy well knew; but with Ned’s strong arm to defend her, she did not much fear, and she ran along beside him, exerting herself to keep pace with his long strides, and chatting as gayly as if she were out on a holiday jaunt. Even when they drew near the river, and the cold November wind swept up the street with a sharp, stinging whistle, she only drew her shawl closer around her, and without a word of complaint, struggled on.

By and by they reached the house. It had once been a storehouse, but for years it had been slowly falling to ruin, and was now inhabited by a set of idle, half-grown boys, who, having no other

home, took what shelter its broken roof and trembling walls could give. Joe Turner was its oldest inmate, and the house went, among these boys, by his name. It looked dreary and desolate enough as they approached it, with the twilight falling darkly around it, and the wind dashing the crazy shutters back and forth; while the open door swung slowly to and fro with a dismal creaking noise.

“O Ned! Isn't it a dreadful place?” said Rosy, clinging close to him.

“Yes, it is pretty lonesome of a dark night. Come inside, while I see if he's here.”

He had to lift her up and set her within the door, for the wooden steps, which led to the entrance, had long

since disappeared; and when he sprang up beside her and took her hand to lead her on, Rosy was forced to commit herself entirely to his guidance; it was so dark.

"Wait a minute, and I'll strike a light," said Ned. "There's a trap-door somewhere between the stairs and the door, and it wouldn't be very gay to walk down there."

He took a box of matches from his pocket and lighted one. A flight of stairs, with the banisters broken down, and with huge rat-holes in almost every step, rose directly before them; the trap-door of which Ned had spoken lying open, close beside.

"It's good I struck the match, wasn't it?" said he. "I guess he's gone off, or

we'd hear 'em. I'll call. Hallo, there, Joe!"

There was no answer.

"Will Conroy!"

"You wait here while I run up; I'm afraid to let you on these stairs."

He sprang away as he spoke, and Rosy was left alone in that dreary place, with the open trap-door on one side, and on the other all the grim shadows which she had seen, as the flickering light of the match fell around her for a moment; while the rats rushed about in every direction quite undismayed by her presence. She tried hard to be brave, and began to sing a hymn to keep up her courage; but her voice trembled so that she could scarcely pronounce the words, and when a rat sud-

denly ran across the floor behind her, with a sharp squeal, she could bear it no longer, and a cry of terror, took the place of the last note of her tremulous hymn. Ned was beside her in a moment.

“What’s the matter?” he asked anxiously. “Did somebody scare you?”

“Oh, the rats, and the big hole in the floor, and, and — oh, I’m sorry Ned, but I was so frightened. I did try not to scream,” sobbed Rosy.

“Poor little thing! It’s such a lonesome place,” said Ned, kindly. “Let’s go out.”

“But Will?” said Rosy, trying to speak very steadily, but failing entirely in the effort.

“Oh, you’ll have to give it up, Rosy

He's off to John Hall's, away up to Fifty-seventh Street. I found one of the fellows upstairs, asleep. I woke him up, and he says that Will has gone there for the night."

"But, Ned, isn't it a bad place?"

"I should think it was."

"Let's go coax him out, Ned."

The boy looked at her in amazed silence. "Why child it's a'most out to Central Park," he said at length.

"I know it. Can't you walk so far?"

"Yes, I can, but you can't."

"Yes, I can; try me, Ned."

"But I tell you you couldn't do it, Rosy."

"And I tell you I will do it," said the child, resolutely. "I can walk a

great deal. I'll be real good if you'll take me, Ned.° I wont get frightened again. Not if I can help it," she added, a little afraid of being put to the test.

He looked down at the eager, up-raised face, and could scarcely resist its pleading, but he did not think it possible for her to accomplish the task after having walked so far already.

"I'm afraid Mother Conroy would be mad at me if I took you so far, Rosy," said he.

"No, she wouldn't. You don't know how worried she is for Will. She'll break her heart if I go home and tell her I left him in that place. Come, please come."

She took his hand in both her own, trying to drag him on with her, and Ned yielded.



IX.

The Lost Brother.

AS they walked on, Ned drew away his hand from the close grasp in which Rosy held it, and thrusting it into his pocket brought out some pennies. An examination into the other pockets produced some more. He counted them over, seven in all. He counted again, felt in his pockets again, but no searching or counting increased the store; seven cents was his whole capital. Soon they reached a street through which a line of cars passed, and Ned hailed one.

"What are you going to do?" asked Rosy, in surprise.

"Ride," was the reply.

"But how shall we pay?"

He was lifting her on the platform as she spoke. The conductor heard her. He looked suspiciously at Ned, and, following him into the car, asked him for his fare almost before he had taken his seat.

"Will you let us ride for seven cents," asked the boy, holding out his pennies. "I aint got no more, and the little girl is nigh done up."

"Where are you going?" asked the conductor.

"To Fifty-seventh Street. I know it's pretty much of an ask, but she looks so mighty tired."

The man thought she did look "mighty tired" as he glanced at the pale, weary little face. "Does she live up there?" he asked.

"No. She's goin' up to fetch her brother. He is in a place there where he's no business to be, and she wants to get him home. She lives in Wooster Street."

The conductor was on the point of taking the money, when Rosy said, "I've got one penny, Ned. Mother gave it to me last night," and she drew it out of her pocket. "Only I meant to put it into the missionary-box at Sunday school. They didn't bring the box round to-day, but oughtn't I to keep it for next Sunday?"

"Do you think you ought?" asked the conductor with a smile.

"Why, yes, I think so. If I meant it for them, it's theirs just the same as if I gave it, isn't it? Perhaps not," she added, rather undecided as to whom the money was due. "If it is right for me to give it to you, you may take it; only I didn't want to take it from the missionaries when they're so kind and good, to go away from their nice homes to teach the poor heathen."

"Keep your money, little one," said he, "the missionaries may have it," and with a relieved mind, Rosy tucked her penny safely away in the depths of her pocket.

Pretty soon she began to jolt about in a very unsteady way, on her seat; her head came nodding forward with a

jerk at every motion of the car, and at last she sank back against Ned quite unable to hold herself up any longer. The boy put his arm around her, and drew her to him letting her head rest comfortably upon his lap, and the tired child slept quietly until they reached their journey's end.

As Ned took her hand to lead her from the car, after waking her from her slumber, a gentleman who sat beside him touched his arm. "How do you mean to get that little girl home again?" said he. "She is tired out. She can never walk down to Wooster Street."

"If she can't, then me and her brother must carry her, between us," said Ned.

"Take this," and the gentleman put twenty-five cents into his hand; "that will ride you all."

"Thank you hearty, Mister," said the boy.

Rosy turned back with a smiling face to speak her gratitude, and as she left the car he heard her say, "Isn't that a good man? And he's real pretty."

Ned laughed, and the gentleman smiled too; but he knew that the simple words came from the pure depths of her grateful little heart.

"Oh, Ned, is that where we've got to go?" asked Rosy, looking up fearfully at the wooden huts built on the top of the rocks, that rose abruptly from the street on which they stood.

The early moon shone down brightly on the miserable hovels, bringing all their squalor and wretchedness to view with almost the clearness of daylight. Rosy shuddered as she glanced up, and thought that her brother was probably in one of those dens, and she should perhaps have to enter it to bring him out.

“How do you get there, Ned? We couldn’t climb those rocks.”

He led her around the corner to a flight of stairs, as crazy, and dangerous to mount as those at “Joe Turner’s;” but the rock sloped considerably on this side, and, aiding Rosy to step on it, Ned went up by the stairs, and holding her hand firmly in his, let her walk up the slope.

“There’s Hall’s,” he said, pointing to one of the hovels; “but I don’t want to

take you in, Rosy. Let me see first if I can't call him out."

"Don't leave me alone here, Ned."

"No, come with me to the door. Stand there by the corner, out of sight, while I call him."

He gave a low, peculiar whistle, which was answered from the inside, and the door was slightly opened.

"Is that you, Ned?" said a voice. "Come in."

"No, I can't to-night. Is Will Conroy there?"

"Yes."

"Tell him I want to speak with him."

The door was closed for a moment, then opened again, and Will came out.

"Whistle when you want to come back," said a voice from within, and the door was shut once more.

“What do you want?” asked Will, roughly.

“We want you to come home. Rosy!”

She crept around from her hiding-place and came close to Will.

“We’ve come to fetch you home, Will dear. Please come.”

For a moment he looked at her too much surprised to speak. “How did you ever get to this place?” he said, at last.

“Ned brought me. He’s been so good, Will, you don’t know. He took me over to Turner’s to look for you, and then brought me here. He paid his own money for the riding, too.”

Ned had slowly led the way down toward the street, and the others had followed. He had reached the broken stairs, and paused now to turn and say,

"She meant to walk all the way up here, the brave little lass; but the conductor gave us the ride for what I had. If I hadn't owned a few cents, she'd have walked it, after trotting over to the river, all for the sake of getting you home."

"I can't go home," said Will, sullenly.

"Why not, Willie?" asked Rosy.

"'Cause the old man's angry at me. He wont let me in."

"Yes he will; and poor mother feels so bad to have you out. She says she'll go distracted if you stay from her to-night. And I want you, too. Do come, Will, when I've come so far to fetch you."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," exclaimed Ned, angrily, "to fight off in that fashion when the child's

wore herself off her feet searching for you!"

"Don't, Ned, don't speak cross to him. He'll go with me; I know. He's only tired and cold. Come, Willie. A gentleman gave us money to ride; we'll all go together."

They had reached the street, Ned guiding Rosy down as he had led her up, being afraid to trust her on the stairs. She already held his hand in hers, and now she slipped her fingers into Will's palm, and turned toward the Avenue.

"Come let's go home."

The boys both yielded to the impulse she gave them, and walked on beside her until they reached the railroad. But when Ned would have lifted her into the car, Will put him back and lifted her

himself. The car was full, but room being made for one, Ned motioned Will to the seat, and he took it, placing Rosy on his knee.

"Bend down your head, Will," she said softly, cuddling up close to him.

He bent his head, and she put her arm around his neck as she whispered, "I'm so real glad to have you home."

"Are you, Rosy?" he asked, in the same low tone, looking doubtfully at her.

"Yes, indeed I am."

"What makes you glad to have me?"

"Because mother's eyes wont look so sorry. And because—because"—

"Well, why?"

"Because," and the little girl's voice dropped so low that he could scarcely catch the words, "I think that the angels

in heaven will see a light in Jesus' eyes, too."

"What made you come after me" said Will, after a pause, "when I was so ugly to you?"

"Oh, we wont think about that any more," said Rosy. "Ned told me you thought father wouldn't let you come home, so I said I'd come and bring you."

"You're better off without me," said the boy, gloomily.

"No, we aint. Now, Will, let's begin all new. Let's do like Jesus wants to have us. You were right when you said that I didn't behave as if I loved him; but I'm very sorry, and I'm going to try to be his own dear child now. Will you try too, Willie?"

He did not answer her, but for the

first time in years he kissed the face which lay upon his breast. The color rushed in a quick tide over cheek and brow at the warm touch of those almost stranger lips, and for very gladness she could not speak even in the whispered tones in which their conversation had been carried on.

"Ned," said Rosy, as they parted at the house door, the boy refusing to go in to eat his supper with them, "if there's ever anything I can do for you, will you let me do it? Not that I don't like to think that you've done so much for me," she added, with ready tact, "but I'd be so glad to show you how much I thank you."

He drew her away from Will, and bending close to her, said, "Ask God to make me as sweet and good as you."

“No, no,” she said, moving back with a startled look. “I’m not good at all. But Ned, I’ll ask him to make you dear and good like the Lord Jesus. That’s what I’ll ask him. Good-night, you nice, kind Ned.”

“Good-night,” and the boy mounted the stairs to his lonely attic room. But he was not desolate that night, for though his limbs ached with weariness his heart was light and joyous, and the poor, unfurnished room seemed filled with the music of angel voices whispering words of love and blessing to him who had “done what *he* could.”

“Now come, Willie,” said Rosy, leading the way toward their room.

“No, I can’t come. I dare not face father,” said he, hanging his head.

But at that moment Mrs. Conroy, who had been anxiously listening for every sound, opened the door and looked out.

"Rosy dear, is that yourself?"

"Yes, mother, and Will. Bid him come in. He's afraid father'll be hard on him; but he wont, will he?"

"No, indeed. Come in then, boy, and tell him how sorry you are. And put past all your evil ways, and be a good son to us. Sure and the little sister has had a hard hunt for you, so she has."

"I didn't mind," said Rosy, as she came in, still holding Will by the hand.

And when her father told her to come to him, and, lifting her on his knee, let her lay her head upon his breast while he told her that she was his comfort and his great delight, she rested there


so peacefully, folded in his loving arms, that she forgot all her trouble and fatigue in the glad thought that she had cheered her dear father and mother, and had pleased her precious Saviour.



X.

Rosy's Reward.

THERE'S a knock at the door, Rosy ;
run and see who it is."

 Mrs. Conroy was standing before a washtub busily employed ; for the week's wash had fallen behindhand, and the children's clothes needed to be made clean for the Sabbath. Rosy, who was sitting on the floor, with both the babies on her lap and little Rob close beside her, had some difficulty in obeying her mother's command ; but when the twins were safely laid in the cradle, and Rob had scrambled up to follow her, as usual, she opened the door. There stood Miss Raymond.

"Why, Rosy," said she, "I did not expect to find you here this morning. I supposed that the little merchant would be out with her basket."

"No, ma'am," said Mrs. Conroy, wringing the suds from her hands and coming forward to welcome her visitor. "I was forced to keep her home the day to see to the little ones, while I washed up the bits of clothes against the Sunday. You see the father he's no good just now, and so I had to keep her in. She didn't need to go so much this week, for my boy's at work."

Miss Raymond looked at Rosy, who, having given her a chair, now stood beside her, holding her hand. The little girl did not speak, but she pressed close to her side, and looked up into her face with eyes which told her all she wanted to know.

“ And how is your foot doing ? ” asked the lady, turning to Mr. Conroy, who sat near her.

“ It's doing finely, ma'am, thank you. I'm thinking I'll be about again by next week. It's not been so bad as we feared at the first. Things look brighter for us than they did. The boy has been steady at his work all the week, and if he'll only keep on till Saturday night, he'll make enough to pay the rent ; and then we'll manage to fight along till I get out again.”

“ Do you suppose that he will continue to work, so that Rosy can go to school ? ”

“ I'm sure I couldn't say, ma'am. There's no telling at all what he'll do. He seems to have taken a good turn now, but we don't know how long it will last. I wouldn't like to have her begin, and then take her away again after a few days.”

"No, that would not be best," said Miss Raymond, "but I have been thinking of another plan. If Rosy could be spared from home for two hours every morning, she might come up to my house and I would teach her. Could she do that?"

"O mother, please!" exclaimed Rosy, springing forward with her face all aglow with delight.

But the next moment she drew back. Who was to lead her blind father?

"Look at the eyes of her," said the mother, smiling, as Rosy stood waiting for the answer; quietly, but with her eyes fixed eagerly on her. "Sure, Miss Raymond, we don't know how to thank you, ma'am, but I can't tell how we'd do with the father."

"Couldn't I" — Rosy paused again,

afraid of saying too much and appearing selfish.

"Couldn't you do what, Rosy?" asked Miss Raymond.

"Perhaps it wouldn't do, ma'am; but I thought maybe I could take father with me in the morning, and leave him on a good corner while I go to you; and then go back for him, and lead him where he wants to go. And I could study in the evenings, or while I stand in the street by father. I am sure I could do that," she added, her earnestness overcoming her timidity.

"I am sure you could, too," said Miss Raymond; "if your parents will consent."

"There's no question of consent, ma'am," said the father. "We're only too glad, and thankful for your kindness. The good

Lord will remember and reward you, Miss Raymond."

"He has already given me all the reward," she said, patting Rosy's flushed cheek. "I would do much more than that to bring such a glow into a child's face; especially when I know that the child has been trying, with what strength she has, to lighten other hearts. Isn't that so, Rosy?"

"Indeed it is, ma'am," said Mrs. Conroy, as Rosy only smiled in answer to the question, "'twas she that found Will on the Sunday night, and a long, long search she had for him before she brought him home here. And she's just been that kind and tender to him, ever since that I think the boy's fairly shamed into doing his best. I begin to have a great hope of him now, and all through her. It's her own

doing, every bit of it, for I never urged her to go for him."

"I am so glad," said the lady, in a tone which told how truly glad she was, and which echoed all through Rosy's joyous heart.

Miss Raymond sat for some time longer talking with them, and then rose to leave, taking with her a hearty blessing, partially expressed in words, but a large portion of which was laid away in the depths of those warm hearts, which, during all the years of their lives should follow her with their earnest prayer and grateful love.

"Put on your shawl and hood, and come down to the street with me, Rosy," she said, as she opened the door.

The hood was donned in a twinkling, and passing out of the house together, they went down the alley to the street.

"I wish you needn't go yet, Miss Raymond," said Rosy. "I do so like to have you come to see us."

"I must go now, dear," she said, pausing at the entrance to the court. "You may come up to-morrow morning, and we will make all the arrangements about your lessons so that you can begin with them on Monday. You must be there punctually at nine o'clock. You wont forget that, will you?"

"Oh, no, Miss Raymond. You don't think I'll keep you waiting when you're so good as to teach me. I'll be there in good time, and I'll study just as hard as I know how."

"I shall not make you work so very hard," said Miss Raymond, smiling at her

"I am so happy," she added, bending

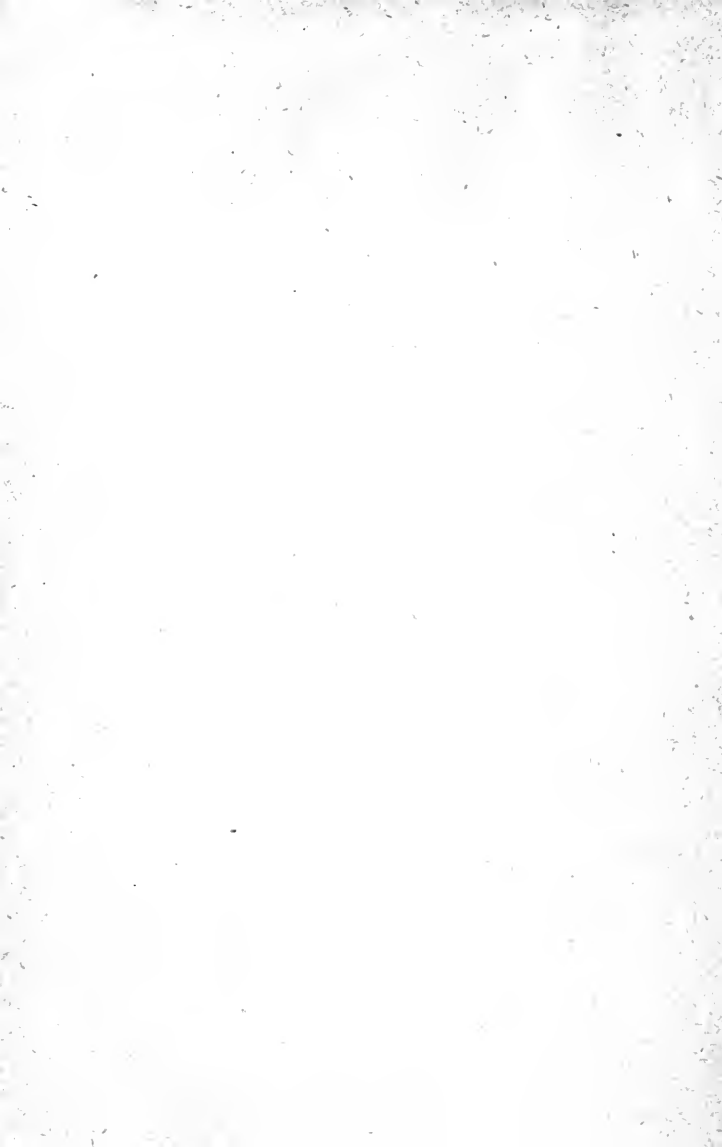
her head, and speaking in a lower tone, "that you have begun so well. My brave little soldier means to fight her battle through, I am sure. But she must remember that all her strength must come from her Captain. She has been very ready to buckle the armor on, and now she must see that it is kept bright. You have made me very, very glad."

"And I am so glad, you don't know," said Rosy, clinging to her. "But, Miss Raymond, you said last Sunday that the time for resting in the sweet, sunny spot was after the fight was fought; and somehow I seem to be in it all the time. The battle isn't over, I know; it's a little hard yet to be real good to him when he comes home pretty cross; but it isn't wrong to feel like singing and being very happy all day, — is it, Miss Raymond?"

"No, darling. God wants his little child to be joyous and gay. You need never be afraid of being too glad, for he loves to see you so. Good-by."

"Good-by."

"Oh, but aint she a sweet one!" said the child to herself as she stood gazing after Miss Raymond's retreating figure, unwilling to lose even the last glimpse. "She's the dearest and best that is. Except the dear God who gave her to me," she added, folding her little hands and looking reverently up into the blue sky.



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